MARTHA'S

HOOKS AND EYES

CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION

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LOS ANGELES

To Emily Carter
From her cousin
Lottie Lane

To Emily Coates.

From her Cousin

Lottie

Sanbe

DELLVILLE.

MARTHA'S HOOKS AND EYES.

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MARTHA'S HOOKS AND EYES.

CHAPTER I.

"MOTHER, will you?"

The mother, busy with hushing the wailing of a sick infant, was unmindful of her elder child's questioning.

"Mother, please do; and then I can have a pair of new shoes;" and the little worn feet-coverings were turned upward, that the portions in usual contact with earth might bear inspection.

The actual want caught the weary mother's notice, and she asked how shoes were to be bought.

"I will buy them, if you will only let me!"

"Let you, what, Martha?"

"Earn money, as Phebe Watson does."

"How does Phebe Watson earn money?"

"She puts hooks and eyes into little holes made for them in paper cards, and is paid two cents for every twelve cards. Please, mother, let me do some?"

The restless infant moaned its little breath of pain, and with a gentle undertone of sorrow, the mother asked, "Where does Phebe Watson get her hooks and eyes?"

"Why, mother, do you not know how busy men have been, working from sunrise to moonlight to get the new mill up on Silver-Sound Creek finished, and now they have it all done and Phebe has had her cards a whole week, and was on her way up with them, when I came from school. Will you let me go for some?" and Martha went up to her mother and looked very eagerly in her face. There she saw, not her answer, but great swelling tears, which were fast falling on baby's hands, but did not still its moans.

"What is the matter, is baby sick? I did not mean to tease you; I'm sorry."

"You did not tease me, my child, but baby is sick, he has been very ill all the day."

"Poor little Harry," whispered Martha, kneeling and kissing the small brow, drawn into pain furrows.

"Can I do any thing, mother?" asked she.

"You may ask Mrs. Norton if she can come to me for a little while," said Mrs. Sanford.

Martha sped away, forgetful of the imaginary treasures to be obtained from her skill with hooks and eyes. Mrs. Norton was ere long with her friend Mrs. Sanford. The two bent over baby Harry in silent sorrow, for the little life was fast ebbing from mortals, and they who watched, could not see its flow upon the Far-Shore-Land. No! it is the angels who walk *that* shore, waiting for the souls who come from over Life's Sea. Evening came on in that cottage home.

The father of the little one came in from his day of toil. He saw the two anxious faces hovering over his child—almost as

silent as they, he joined them. Effort could not save, and ere the mid-hour of the night, the mother knew that the slight form pressing on her arm, contained no longer the spirit God gave unto it.

Now, whilst in the still solemn hour they lay the little soul-mantle down, never more to be worn until the great Resurrection, I will tell you where their thoughts are gone.

CHAPTER II.

Two years before the death scene of little Harry, Mr. and Mrs. Sanford were living in a pretty home on the banks of the Penobscot —misfortune fell like a dark cloud over Mr. Sanford, and when stranger hands unfastened the little gate, and lifted his door's latch, and alien feet trod his hearth-stone, he went out, homeless, to wander, with his wife and the one child, Martha.

An enclosed, precious place, just beyond the pretty garden paling of their Penobscot home, there was.

Within it were four swelling mounds, green with summer growth, brown with autumnal fadings, or white with winter snows, and dear alike, amid them all.

Charlie, bright and glowing, went one day

from his home, and ere fall of evening was brought from the river's flow, life gone. Charlie slept in the sacred fold.

Mary, gentle child, scarlet fever was her convoy beyond the portals of parental care. Mary slept with Charlie, there.

Guarding these, were two graves of larger growth.

The grandfather and grandmother of drowned Charlie, and silent Mary, beneath them, are awaiting the blest awakening.

This sacred spot was now the sole possession left of all that once had been "the home" in Maine—can Harry find a resting in death, in a place his year of life never knew?

Martha Sanford was but ten years old. When Charlie was drowned, and Mary died, she was too young to comprehend what had occurred; now, on this night of Harry's death, she was laid in her little bed, but she could not sleep. She knew that within the next room her baby brother was, and yet was not.

Death troubled the child. She thought, here I am, I can see those Stars shining and that Moon going down. I can move, and why cannot Harry? where is he? does *he* see the moon and stars?

Whilst these unanswered, unanswerable questions, kept sleep from Martha's eyes, she heard her mother's voice. Its tone was so sad, that she arose to listen, lest some sorrow, even more recent than the one that came at midnight, had dawned. She heard "Can we not take him there?"

"My wife, how can it be?"

"Any thing we have left, let it go; but this child must have its grave made there"—and the wife added, "Robert, this must be done."

"If it can be, it shall, but I see no way."

The voices were heard no more, and Martha put her busy, planning, aching head on her pillow, and in the darkness, whispered again the Saviour-taught "Our Father" prayer, and fell asleep.

Morning came as it always does over a

sorrow, making it look larger in the early light.

Mrs. Sanford stole quietly into Martha's room to see how her child slept. She bent over her lightly, touching her forehead, and prayed "God bless mine only Earth-child; the others, O Eternal, are in the place where Thy blessing abideth forevermore. I pray Thee, if it be possible, let this one be blest, remaining."

Martha wakened with the touch of her mother's kiss, but the solemn earnest tone of her prayer, kept the child's eye-lids close until Mrs. Sanford passed from the room.

Death teaches even little children thoughtfulness, and for the first time in her life, Martha thought how tired her mother must be, and dressing as fast as possible she went into the kitchen to help prepare the breakfast, and so silently did she anticipate what must be done, that when breakfast was in readiness to be eaten, she had in reality accomplished as much, as though it had been an old duty to prepare it, instead of a new effort.

When breakfast was over and the sad-hearted father had read from the Book given to guide in all darkness, and to comfort in all grief, he prayed, praying for their every need, and Martha's heart grew lighter, when she knew that her father and her mother were under the protecting love that was so earnestly sought.

When school time came she did not exactly know whether or not she was to go to school. She decided the matter by determining not to ask, but to await her mother's bidding. Her little feet were very busy going about whatever her thoughts told her must be done, and she did it without troubling her mother with questions.

During the morning some kind-hearted neighbors came in, having heard from Mrs. Norton that death had entered into the cottage, although they knew not its inmates, for Mr. Sanford had but two months before moved into the village, Dellville, and his secluded manner of life had served to render him unknown. Mrs. Norton was a friend

of Mrs. Sanford's when the two were children, and though long separated, their love bridged the time over and they met accidentally in Dellville, with great joy on both sides.

The Pastor of the church at which Mr. and Mrs. Sanford were attendant worshippers, was a young man, too young to have known all sorrow by experience, but he came too, offering his sympathy and speaking words meant to comfort. Not one of these knew that a few dollars would have been so valuable to the aching hearts they came to help—that the comfort most needed from earthly friends was pecuniary aid.

Two full hours, Mr. Sanford planned in his mind, yet nothing seemed to come to his aid—money he could not obtain, and the dead child must be buried in Dellville.

It was impossible to have it otherwise, and the morrow's sun ere it reached the zenith, looked into Harry's bed, deep down in earth—Harry's grave was grassed over, when the sun went down.

CHAPTER III.

The next morning, life in the cottage commenced as before death came, outwardly.

Mr. Sanford went to his day of toil, Martha went to her school, and Mrs. Sanford—but we will not, because we cannot, follow her, as she walks with musing footsteps every room, putting out of sight baby-clothing, baby-toys, and hiding deep the baby memory from every eye but her own, and His who gave the great love and who only comprehendeth it.

The desire, so suddenly arrested, to exert herself by the hook and eye industry, returned to Martha.

It mingled with her "Child's Book of History," became strangely mixed into the multiplication table, and she found twelve times

two the easiest sum to remember, because Phebe Watson had told her "she earned twenty-four cents, for twelve dozen cards, at two cents for every twelve." Shoes were no longer the first object. Another had come before her, when she looked upon the shining stars, and saw the moon go down, and heard her mother begging to have Harry laid beside Charlie and Mary.

Yes! Martha had made a great resolve, that if she could, she would have patience, and earn money enough to give her father to remove her brother to Maine.

She kept this intention tightly within herself.

The day was very long to Martha, almost as long as to the grief-touched father, and the lonely mother.

When four o'clock came and the scholars were dismissed, Martha sought Phebe Watson, and asked her when she was going to the mill for more work.

"To-night," replied Phebe, "as soon as I carry home my books and get my basket."

"May I go with you?" asked Martha.

"Yes, but what for?" questioned Phebe.

"Never mind, now," answered Martha, "but stop for me on your way, and if I can go with you I will."

The two girls separated, and Martha hurried her walk home, to have time to talk to her mother before the coming of Phebe.

She put her books in their appointed place, and with a beating heart, she opened the subject, without going directly into the midst of it.

"Mother, Phebe Watson is going up to the new mill on Silver-Sound Creek to-night."

"Well, my child," responded Mrs. Sanford.

"She is going to carry back her work, the hooks and eyes I told you of," resumed Martha, after a moment or two of silence, during which she watched the road down the hill to see if Phebe was on her way up it.

"I am glad to hear that she is an industrious little girl," said her mother.

Another pause, during which Phebe's sun-bonnet showed itself down the road just rising into view.

"Mother," began Martha again, "you said you were glad to know that Phebe was industrious; don't you wish me to be industrious?"

"Certainly, Martha, why do you ask me if I wish my little girl to have a good quality? I like to see you diligent in all things. You gave me much pleasure the day after Harry died, by the manner in which you helped me." At the mention of Harry's name, a great sigh came up from that well of feeling, the heart; it almost disarmed Martha of courage, but Phebe Watson's sun-bonnet was no longer all that told of her approach. She was very near.

"Phebe is coming now," said Martha.

"Coming here, Martha?"

"Yes, mother, I asked her to call here on her way. I wish to go up with her to the mill; may I? She is at the gate now."

"I won't be gone long, mother," added she, as Mrs. Sanford hesitated.

Phebe knocked.

Before opening the door Martha repeated her question, and the reply was, "Yes."

Phebe came in, and putting down her basket, waited, whilst Martha, not yet at rest, went into her own room, after some imaginary article, which, if she had been a little older she would have known to be "time to think."

The great question was yet unasked. Phebe had come too soon.

Not finding her want, Martha came out after a moment, and whispering to her mother, as Phebe opened the door, she asked,

"If I can get some hooks and eyes to put on, may I? Please say yes."

"Come, Martha, I'm in a hurry," called Phebe from outside.

Mrs. Sanford in her sudden loss had forgotten the conversation before held on the same subject, and had been unconscious of the intent of her daughter's questioning.

Now, she gave the eager little face, with its bright eyes and glowing color, a kiss, and remembering that baby Harry no longer needed her care, in her out of school hours, she gave consent.

"Thank you, mamma; you don't know, you can't tell how much I thank you," and Martha gave a parting kiss, and bounded after Phebe, who all unconscious of the important negotiation pending within, was swinging her impatient self on the gate when Martha came to it.

"I wish you would come, I must be at home in half an hour."

"I am here, don't you see me, Phebe?"

"If you are really ready, we will start."

"Commence then, by coming off of that gate; you'll swing it down," said Martha.

"I'd rather swing my basket down that hill just now," laughingly said Phebe, jumping down and starting onward, giving a motion to her arm that sent backward and forward the basket containing her finished work.

A few steps had she taken, when the cover fell from the basket, and out upon the dusty road, the pure white cards containing their rows of shining hooks and eyes, rolled in confused array.

"O! Phebe," was all that Martha said: but she began picking out of the dust the cards.

Phebe stood still, too much hurt and dismayed to utter one word.

"'Tis not so *very* bad, after all," said Martha, showing Phebe the first-fruits of her gathering.

In Phebe's eyes were tears; she magnified the soil of the cards through them. "They are not fit to take back now; what shall I do?" said she.

"It's only dust; I will carry them back to mother, and she will make them look better by a nice fine brush she has," said Martha.

The prospect of relief, near or remote, was all the incentive Phebe needed, and she went to work with a brighter face to gather

up the strewn fragments of what were carefully assorted piles, when she left home.

The brush that Martha looked to for the bettering of their trouble was all she fancied it. A vigorous brushing restored their appearance, and with no desire to swing the basket again, the two children started the second time. With quickening steps they went, for the delay had caused a half-hour to go by, and when they came to the bridge across Silver-Sound Creek, the new mill bell was ringing, at the work-day's close.

"I hope Mr. Clifford is not gone; do hurry, Martha, and almost breathless with running, Phebe reached the mill just in time to see Mr. Clifford turning the great key in the lock of the office-door.

"Too late to-night, my little girl," said he, "you should have come earlier."

"I tried, sir, indeed I did."

"You tried, and did not, how was that?"

Phebe's disappointment was so great that she could not answer.

Martha spoke for her.

"It was my fault that she was not in time. I asked her to call for me, and because I was not ready she came to be late."

Mr. Clifford looked at the two children with hesitation in his manner. Martha, all unconsciously took the moment of advantage, and urged, "Please take her work this time, for she feels so badly about it, for some of the cards are not nice any more."

"Not nice?" asked Mr. Clifford, turning to the right the huge key, which he had not removed from the lock. "How came that to be?"

"Because I let them drop on the road," said Phebe, with a troubled look and tremulous voice.

"Come in, children, come in, and let me see about this matter," not unkindly, said Mr. Clifford.

He opened the contents of the basket, lifting one by one the cards. There were forty-eight. Out of these he selected six which he told Phebe could not go to market in their soiled condition.

"But what shall I do?" said she.

"I cannot pay you for these six cards, but I will do this. I will give them to you, and you can refasten them upon fresh cards."

"Never mind, Phebe, I'll help you to do it," whispered Martha.

Mr. Clifford heard this, but appeared to take no notice of it. He gave the money due to Phebe, and a fresh supply of work.

"Please, sir," said Martha, "will you let me have some to do? I would like to have them."

"I do not know you," said Mr. Clifford. What is your name?"

"Martha Sanford, sir." "Sanford, that is not a frequent name here; what is your father's christian name?"

Martha did not know what he meant; she only said, "What, sir?"

He repeated the question. Still Martha did not understand. "I don't know what you mean," said she.

"I mean what is the name your mother calls your father, when she speaks to him?"

"Mother calls father "Oby," said Martha; "is that what you mean?" Mr. Clifford, amused at the result of his questioning, and resolving to be more direct, he asked this time, "what is the whole name of your father?"

"Robert Sanford," said Martha, pleased at last to answer what she knew.

"Have you lived a long time in Dellville?"

"No, we came when the snow was just going away."

"Where did you live before you came here?"

Martha mentioned three towns, at each of which her parents had endeavored to obtain a home.

None of these seemed to satisfy Mr. Clifford. He asked if Martha had been in Maine.

"Oh yes," said Martha, "we lived there at first."

A few more questions and answers, and Mr. Clifford was convinced that Martha's

father was known to him, a long time ago, it seemed.

"Well! children, if you are ready, we will say good-night, for that sun does not wait for me."

"*Won't* you give me some hooks and eyes?" pleaded Martha.

"Certainly, I had forgotten."

"Tell your father that I give them to you because of the memory of a salmon, caught in the Penobscot."

Martha and Phebe both laughed, but Martha promised to tell her father exactly what he said.

The two children went with light hearts over the distance between the mill and their homes. When they were come to the parting place, Martha kissed Phebe good-night, and said, "Dont forget, Phebe, that I am to help you with the cards. Bring them to school and we will do them in the recess."

"Thank you; good-night," said Phebe, starting for a run, for suddenly she remembered that she was very long after her time.

She was careful of her basket, and reached her home with it in proper order.

We left Mr. Clifford near the mill. He too walked home, but with the question coming often to his mind, "What can have brought Robert Sanford from his home in Maine, and his little daughter, to ask for work?"

CHAPTER IV.

"PAPA" said Martha Sanford when tea was over, on the evening she obtained her treasure, for it was one. Her heart had diligently sought it. "I went up to the new mill, on Silver Sound Creek, with Phebe Watson to-night, and mamma said I might get some hooks and eyes to put on cards. When I asked the gentleman there for some, he asked me my name. I told him, and he wished to know where I had lived before coming here; and then your name. And, papa, was it not funny; when he gave me the work, he bade me tell you, that he did it because of a fish, a salmon I believe he said, caught in the Penobscot? What could he mean?"

"What was the gentleman's name?"

"Mr. Clifford, Phebe told me."

"Joseph Clifford! is he in this place?" questioned Mr. Sanford, as if asking the question to himself, "and he remembers that salmon fishing," added he, in a still lower voice.

"Do tell me about it, father;" and Mrs. Sanford looked interested; but the husband and father was not in the mood for relating the occurrence. Martha, with a power of entering into his feeling, she knew not why, did not repeat her wish.

With alacrity she assisted her mother in putting in order the house for the night. A half hour was yet wanting, to fill the time for her going to bed; in it, she resolved to begin her long labor. Bringing out her precious store she commenced.

When the half-hour was gone, (and anxiously she had watched the clock in her intervals of taking up and putting down,) she found that she had earned just one penny.

With that shining as bright and clear as

if as fresh from the United States Mint as in her own imagination, she put up the work, and kissed her parents good-night.

In her bed, the same place where the great question "What is Death?" had perplexed her so recently, she revolved another to-night. How much money was necessary to carry out her wish, and how much time would it take to earn it; as formerly, she slept ere she satisfied herself.

Her eyes were opened the following morning long before their accustomed awakening. "I wonder what time it is," thought she; "there is my Robin up and singing; why should not I be up and working." Her haste to be at work was so great, that she had taken her box out and seated herself at the window near which Robin poured his song, before she thought that her prayers were unsaid. Something in birdie's melody suggested her own need, and half alarmed, little Martha put her box down and performed the accustomed duty. "I feel better now," thought she, (and who does not feel better for asking the Giver of all good for his great need, His

love?) and taking her seat again at the window, she used her fingers with all possible rapidity. With the first footstep of her mother she resolved to go out and help her; "for," she reasoned, "if I can get up early to do this, I surely ought to help mother when she has so much to do."

To her great surprise, when the morning bell from Silver Sound Creek rang, she had earned another penny.

"I must have commenced at half-past five o'clock," thought she.

Now she heard voices; and true to her resolve she went to help in the kitchen.

"Up so early, my child; why was it?" asked Mrs. Sanford.

"O mamma, I think Robin awoke me, noisy fellow; I got up and have earned another penny this morning, and now wish to help you."

"I can prepare breakfast very well without you; so you may return to your penny-making," replied her mother.

School-time was rather too soon in its

coming for the busy child, who was gathering together the first few sands of a great achievement; and very golden they looked, though taking the seeming of copper pence.

Just upon the verge of being late, Martha arrived at the school-house. It was the custom of the schoolmaster of Dellville to have the door closed during the opening exercise, and just in time to slide a book into the lessening crevice, thereby betokening her presence, was Martha; it was acknowledged, and she admitted.

True to her promise, Martha went to Phebe Watson at the recess, and together the two girls remained within the room and worked at the task. It was unaccomplished in the allotted time, as the taking out occupied more moments than the putting in. "I'll come early this afternoon, and we will finish before school commences," cheeringly whispered Martha, as the scholars came in.

The lessons of this and many succeeding days were learned with great effort by our little friend, but she tried faithfully to do her duty.

CHAPTER V.

Saturday afternoon of the week of Martha's first visit to the mill came. Oftentimes she had repeated the miscellaneous table in her arithmetic that contained the assurance that twelve dozen make one gross; but until now it had been the mere repetition of idle words. She had counted the twelve dozen now, one by one, and knew the truth of her lesson by experience. Twelve cards were without their shining metal rows of occupants at this afternoon's commencement. The sun poured down its kingly flood of radiance over the world in general, and a princely portion rolled into Dellville. The hills on every side of the village gave to it a reflected store. It was the end of the month of May. Not alone did the sun-flood tempt

Martha Sanford to throw down her work, there was the sweet, ringing tide of bird-song rolling out from the ocean of green, that waved its strong flow right among the little snowy ebb-wreaths of fruit and flower trees, and although wisps of foam continually were cast from them upon the brown coast of earth, nobody seemed hurt, or said even "'Tis a pity," because all knew, that better would be the fruit than the flowers.

I do not know that Martha thought of the application of this truth to the task she had undertaken, but I do know that her temptation to run out and mingle herself with bird, and bee, and flower, was very great; but she did think, or try to think of the time it would require before dollars should take the place of cents. At four of the clock her gross was completed. Twenty-four cents glistened in the air before her, as she, alone, went her way up Silver Sound Creek. "I wonder what Mr. Clifford will give to me," thought she, "and if he will call my work well done."

Her heart was beating fast and hard, when

she opened the door of the mill. She had thought to meet Mr. Clifford, and when she did not see his among the faces there, she knew not what to do. Still she stood for at least three minutes, before any one noticed the wee figure amid the huge machines, and their confused array. The man who first saw her, asked, who she wanted.

"I wish to see Mr. Clifford, if you please, sir."

"Then you must go into the office; I will show you the way."

Martha had mistaken the entrance.

Mr. Clifford saw the trouble Martha was in, and told her to sit a little while, as he could not give her attention immediately, judging that time would restore her embarrassment.

After awhile, he opened her package, examined and commended her manner of doing the work. "This done," he said, "You must have been very busy. How did you find time to do all of this package in one week?"

"I mean to do more next week," said Martha.

"That is not telling me how this was accomplished," laying his hand upon the parcel.

Martha wondered at his asking such a question. She did not know what to tell him. She began with, "I awake earlier in the morning," then stopped.

Mr. Clifford, smiling, asked if hooks and eyes awakened her.

"No, sir; I awoke though, because they were there."

Farther questions brought out the truth, that every hour had been made to do its duty.

Mr. Clifford would have sought further knowledge of the reason why Martha was so eager to have the labor, and so earnest in performing it, but honor forbade his learning the home need, if need there was, from the child. He gave Martha gross No. two, and with it a bright piece of silver, which she held tightly all the way home.

With joy beaming in her eyes she showed the result of her week's industry to her mother.

"How much did you earn?" asked Mrs Sanford.

"Twenty-four cents."

"This is twenty-five," said her mother.

"Mr. Clifford made a mistake then; but I can tell him to-night, for he is coming here to see Father; he said so."

There was an unusual stir in the cottage prior to the expected arrival. The room, once of better pretensions than now, was the living room of the family; articles of furniture, one after another, had departed to come back in a new form, that of needful food, until there were not enough to furnish two rooms.

Therefore one, the former kitchen, was deserted, and the better one became the representative of parlor and kitchen. It was made brighter than usual to-night, for in brighter scenes had their expected visitor greeted them in former days; and no person

likes to have an old friend meet them when looking, from *necessity*, worse than formerly.

Mrs. Sanford had gotten out the only remaining better dress left to her; for two years of winter want and summer poverty, almost, had wasted her store.

Mr. Sanford noted the changes when he came in, and although unusually desponding, he was brightened by the unwonted air of cheeriness hovering about the apartment.

"What is this change, wife?" he asked.

"Papa we are going to have a visitor."

"Hush, Martha," said her mother, and going up to her husband, she took from him his straw hat still moist from the effort of the laborer, and looking into his eyes in a low soothing tone, said, "Oby, an old friend of ours, Mr. Clifford, wishes to see you; you won't mind his coming, will you."

"I wish he would stay away," was the ungracious response.

"When he is gone, I don't believe you will repeat that wish for the future. I am

looking to his visit with pleasure; because I feel that good will grow from it."

"Good does not seem to grow in our soil, and I fear no root of it is left since we were forced from the old place."

"Never mind, husband, you know winds carry seeds great distances, and seeds are better than roots sometimes; and if we are not looking, we *may not see when God sends us what we want*, and it may pass by. Look up, Oby, and if a bit of blue tells where the sun makes deep the sky, go out to meet the opening."

Now Mr. Sanford had this day finished a month of labor which had given his family sustenance, and it, only. He had hoped for a continuation of the same; but came home with disappointment darkening the present and glooming the future. He looked upon his wife as she stood speaking to him. He knew, as few men ever can know, that deep underneath the outward seeming, her heart burned upon its altar the daily fire of suffering; that sorrow for the little one made

its abiding there; and yet amid it all, he thought, "she can come and talk in this way, to me, a man, who ought to be stronger than she." What have I done with my manhood? mentally questioned he.

"Separated it from the Creator thereof," was the reply coming up from his inner self. "She keeps her trust there. I am often taking mine away, and putting it, nowhere."

He arose from the chair into which he had put himself during his wife's cheering words, and going to the door, leaned against the side of it, and drew into his eyes the still, softening beauty of the falling day, and into his heart the still, subduing influence of a moment of prayer.

Then he mused, forgetting that his evening tea was untasted. It required a gentle reminder from Martha to win him to it.

When over, it was with quickening steps that traces of its having been, were removed.

Just when the light of the moon grew stronger than that of the departed sun, Mr. Clifford arrived. Martha admitted him. It

was with an effort that Mr. Sanford arose to greet him. Not so with his wife; her accost was both without effort and genial, covering her husband's distant manner.

Mr. Clifford saw at once that changes had come indeed, and not to notice them, was his friendly part. As if the past were the present, he went at once into it; and one would have believed the present occupants of this cottage in Dellville to be only passing, on a journey, a night within it, instead of an uncertain time. Old scenes grew up again.

Mr. Clifford won Mr. Sanford to the recital of events in which both had taken part, when, young, and full of fearless life, they had gone on expeditions into forest, or out on the curiously formed and twisted lakes of Central Maine.

Particularly did he delight to recall the adventurous trip to the height of Mount Katahdin, made in the first year of their acquaintance.

He wrought his old friend up to a degree

of enthusiasm his wife and child had not beheld since the time when "Osier Pass" (the name of their dear home farm, named long years ago, by the lumbermen who left, as it were, near to it, the vestiges of civilization in their course to the Pine Region, had been his own.

He turned aside from the current of the conversation, to tell every now and then to Martha some little event of curious interest. He told, how the acquaintance of her father was made. It was in the season of spring, when the ocean-wintered fish run up the rivers, and into the little bays formed occasionally by the river waters coming down from the far regions of snow.

Eager was the strife among the fishermen for the first salmon. One dark night, two boats lay near to each other in the quiet recess of a little bay in the Penobscot, opposite to the village of Hampden.

A torch of the white pine tree threw its strange, fanciful glare upon the river and the forest shade above the bank. By acci-

dent the torch in one boat had been lost overboard. The occupants of the two boats were strangers, but the unity of the occupation gave the one an interest in the other. Unwilling to give up the night's sport, the boat from which the torch had departed, kept within the circle of the lighted one for some time without speaking. After an hour of patient watching, a fine fish made itself seen, coming almost to the boat, which lay a little in the shadow.

Mr. Clifford, for it was he who sat, spear in hand, awaiting the first opportunity to dart it, arose quickly and made an effort to throw his spear aright. A little too late; the fish came out of the angle of it, and Mr. Sanford, the occupant of the other boat, had full opportunity to use his own well-poised instrument. Quickly as possible he used his spear, not however to make the salmon his own, but giving a new direction to his neighbor's spear, he guided it into the poor fish, who came struggling up upon its point into the boat, which carried no torch. "Nobly

done, that was, friend Sanford," said Mr. Clifford, when he finished telling to Martha the story.

The quiet pressure of his little daughter's hand, was more approving than his friend's commendation.

Mr. Sanford was aroused now, on his friend's behalf.

"Martha," said he, "Mr. Clifford is making it appear that your father did him a favor by permitting him to have the honor of spearing the first salmon of the season, in the river Penobscot. Let me tell you how he rewarded it. The next year after this happened, we started together for Mount Katahdin accompanied by a guide, a lumberman, who had long walked the forests of Maine, and knew his hatchet's peculiar cut in the trees, to mark his way, from that of a hundred others, even, though years had healed the seams, and left only scars to mark the places.

"We carried a few articles, necessary to the cooking of our food, which we expected

to find in our pathway, or, by turning a little out of it; besides, our fire-arms, and a boat made of the bark of a tree. The boat, the guide carried bound upon his shoulders, and overhanging his head; a queer-looking being he was, with this half-umbrella, half-house, covering his shoulders, and coming out like a great roof on all sides of his head. Two weeks we wandered, using the boat in crossing the streams we met, and sometimes spending half the day gliding down the smooth current, when it carried us the right way for Mount Katahdin. Three weeks from the time we left Bangor we found ourselves at the mountain's foot. It was near to night when we came to it. The guide told us he knew a little farther on that there was a rocky basin, formed in years past by some stream coursing down the mountain's side, but whose course was now stopped, save at the snow-melting, in the spring; a nice retreat, where we might light our fire, and cook, eat, and then sleep securely. Our feet were weary with walking, but his description of the place was

tempting, and we were come to the point where the boat might be left, and our luggage, in part, taken up by Giffy, the guide. We found the place all Giffy had said, and enjoyed our supper amazingly. "Do you remember what we ate that night, Clifford?" asked Mr. Sanford.

"Do I forget it now or ever?" replied Mr. Clifford. "Our salt was gone, our depot of provisions a hundred miles away. We ate hard-bread, brook-trout, saltless, but with a flavoring of mountain mint that makes its memory fragrant yet; and our coffee, its aroma and fumes are round me still."

"Where *was* the coffee-pot at breakfast?" laughingly asked Mr. Sanford.

"Go on with your story, and tell it all," answered Mr. Clifford.

"Our supper eaten," continued the narrator, "we looked about us for beds for three. We found looking did not find them; therefore we resolved to borrow."

"How funny!" exclaimed Martha. "You had no neighbors, whom did you borrow from?"

"From a dame that lives in a great round house, and never shuts her windows nor locks her doors, but lends to everybody who is willing *to go after what they need.*" Martha was as sorely puzzled, as when Mr. Clifford had asked her father's Christian name.

"What do you mean, papa? A woman does not live up on that big mountain, does she?" asked she.

"Her house is the 'round world,' and her name is 'Nature,'" answered Mr. Sanford.

"Well! she lent us beds, but we had to go and get them.

"Giffy's hatchet came into use. We cut branches of the hemlock, carried them into the basin, spread our three beds side by side. On the open wall of our house, just outside, that the smoke might not stifle us in the night, Giffy built the great watch-fire.

"Mr. Clifford and I laid ourselves down in this mountain resting-place. Giffy was to hold a watch in his hand, and call one of us at the end of an hour. Duly, at ten of the clock he summoned me, and lying down

on the hemlock, he, in a moment's time, was groaning ont all the pent-up grumblings of the day's care. This was in no way pleasant, but what could we do? Giffy was an immense man; we could not keep turning him in his sleep, like a child, to quiet, for a moment, his hoarse laments, neither could we ask him for his room, or turn him out; therefore I took up my watch, hoping my friend Clifford would sleep well until his turn came. The watch lay in my hand, the fire shut out the darkness outside, the seamed, dark arch of the rock-basin grew larger in my imagination as I sat gazing into its cracks, and peering out into the heart of the flame, alternately. I looked at my watch. It was half-past ten.

"The next moment, as I thought, a sound rang through the enclosure,—deep, heavy, dense, as though a great burst of thunder had come in and rent the walls of our house.

"I started up, for, to my surprise, I thought the thunder had thrown me down. Giffy's hoarse voice came next.

"What's come now?" he cried, shaking himself out of the hemlock entanglements. "Who knocked there?"

"I reckon he is gone."

"Take care," was the cool reply of Clifford. "He'll be ugly, if there is any life in him now."

There he lay, a strange visitor, surely; a bear, huge, dark, and gasping, not three feet from where I had taken up my watch.

"You shot?" growled Giffy, betraying regret in his tone that he been deprived the pleasure.

"It is time to shoot, isn't it, when a bear takes a bite at a friend's head? Look after your cap, friend," said Clifford to me.

I did look, and it was not on my head, surely, but safe in the grasp of the dying bear's jaws.

"He'll open the door soon," went on Giffy; "there, that is the last breath of the old fellow."

"I thought you were asleep," said Mrs. Sanford to Mr. Clifford.

"I was supposed to be, but I had been too much in the woods to trust new hands to take old duties, and when Giffy began to snore, I began to wake, and soon our watcher's head began to waver, going lower and lower, until it found a resting-place. 'His hour is up,' thought I, 'and mine may as well begin.' I lay still, fully awake. The first object that arrested my notice was a new shadow, coming between me and the fire. Not long looking did it require to convince me that it was Bruin himself, and taking a fancy to our coffee urn. He held it tightly, but quickly, as only a bear can, he dropped it, and sprang at the head of my poor sleeping friend, mistaking, doubtless, his cap covering of fur, for some old enemy. My gun was ready, and poor Bruin's life was the result."

Two hours did Mr. Clifford spend with the Sanford family, telling them many pleasing things, and when he arose to leave, it was with the request that Mr. Sanford would come up and see him.

"Where is your house?" asked Mr. Sanford. "I do not know where to find you."

"Alas! as of old, I have no home; but come up to the mill any time when you have leisure, and I shall be glad to see you. Good night."

He was gone, and the cottage-door closed behind him.

Mrs. Sanford did not need to remind her husband of her prophecy, "that he would not echo his wish for his friend's continued absence." His face said as clearly as possible, "The man has done me good; I hope he will come again."

Yet, one ray of material benefit had not fallen. Only the charm of a full, cheerful disposition had enlivened his heart, and brought back pleasant days whose shade was refreshing.

CHAPTER VI.

Two weeks went by. Martha's industry did not grow less. It increased. The shoes which were so much worn when Harry died, waxed older with every day's use. In the time, Martha had earned one dollar. She found something might be gained by carrying her work to school, and seeking out some retired corner, at the moments when the children were at play, she wrought with great earnestness.

Saturday night came at the end of the third week. Martha was rather late in carrying her work home; and even when she arrived, she found Mr. Clifford in too much of haste to attend to her immediately. The mill was closed, but some payments were to be made yet.

"Are you in a great hurry to-night?" he said.

"Not a great hurry, but a little one," replied Martha. "Mother has to walk to the village to buy me a pair of shoes after I go home."

"If that is all, sit down, Martha," he said, "till I am through with those men."

"I wonder if Mr. Clifford thinks it is nothing for mother to go out to buy me shoes," thought Martha. "He would think it something if he only knew how much I need them." Her thoughts ran back to the last fortnight, during which her father had been half of the time without employment, and hunger had come into their home.

The group of men had received their week's reward, and gone out one by one, until only Mr. Clifford remained. "Now, little friend, we will do our share of business," he said. "First, here is your work, all well done, and more of it, too, than last week, and here is your money. You have earned forty cents. You were going to buy shoes, you said. I

have a lot of them here," pulling out a wooden box. "Come, and see if any of them will suit you."

Martha chose a pair, very like those out of which her small feet had been urging their way for at least a month, until mending would not serve to keep them in.

"Won't you put them on?" asked Mr. Clifford. "They may not fit you."

"Can I bring them back if they do not?" asked Martha.

"Certainly."

Martha put into his hand the forty cents he had just given her, and said, "I will bring you the rest when I come again." Mr. Clifford gently put it back, and closing the child's hand firmly over it said, "No! keep your money. Tell your father I have owed him a cap, for the one Bruin spoiled, this fifteen years, and give you this, as part interest. Your money you will want to buy blue ribbons with, or some other finery for the fourth of July, which is soon coming."

"Indeed I shall not," said Martha, tears

brimming full her eyelids. "I would not use it for such things."

"What would you do with it then? buy a doll?"

"No, sir."

"Books, then; perhaps you want some new books?"

"But I will not use my money to buy them."

"You'll buy something, won't you? for I should be sorry to see you a little miser. What is it now that you wish, if neither blue ribbons, doll, nor books?"

"My mother wants a grave for my little brother who is dead, and I want to buy it for her." Once opened, and Martha told Mr. Clifford all her little heart had in it of sorrow for her parents, and desire that her mother might know that baby was with the others. Earnestly she mourned Harry's death, telling in a touching, childish way, how lonely they all were without him.

Mr. Clifford had no fear that any one

should think him weak, that large tears were called out at this simple, true heroism.

He walked half way home with Martha, that night, feeling that he was not walking life's way with the true effort that this child was making.

"I will seek Sanford," thought he, "and do what I can to better his condition."

With this resolution, he bade Martha a kindly good night, and left her, with the request that she would tell her father to expect a visit from him shortly.

Martha went on until a row of maple trees hid Mr. Clifford from sight, then she ran, pausing for naught, not even to listen to the sunset song of robins, though sweet and loud they sang their evening notes.

When she lifted the latch of the gate, she was too breathless to answer her mother's question of—

"What can have kept you so long?"

"Wait, mamma, till my breath comes back, and I will tell you," she managed to

utter, at intervals in her quick-coming respirations.

"You are so late, and I shall have a long walk for your shoes. It will be very dark before I come back."

"You need not go, mother."

"Do you not wish your shoes, child?"

"No, mother, for I have them."

She told how kind Mr. Clifford had been, and showed his gift of a pair of neat shoes. They proved a perfect fit for the little feet, that for the two weeks past had been making acquaintance with the ground, and were accepted with much gratitude.

"What will you do with your money now?" asked Mrs. Sanford. "What most do you need after your shoes are supplied to you? for I will not ask what your wishes are, for we are limited to wants, dear child," and she gave a kiss, tender and loving, to the rosy face that knew not how to answer.

The owner of the rosy face replied, after a moment, "I would like not to spend my money now. I wish to keep it for awhile."

Mr. Sanford's arrival followed this conversation.

Two packages with brown paper coverings he laid upon the table, half saying, half murmuring, as he did so,—

"I know not when any more food will come to this house."

Mrs. Sanford caught the accents, low as they were, and said,—

"I suppose I need not ask if the prospect of work you had is gone, for if it continued, I am sure my husband would not despair."

"I do not despair; I only know that I have no work, and work is food to the poor, and that we are of that number, you must acknowledge."

"Wait until you get this nice bit of broiled beef, papa, and you won't feel poor. I know I don't; besides Mr. Clifford is coming soon to see you, and he made you feel rich before, didn't he; that is, if feeling happier is feeling richer?" said Martha.

"See my new shoes." added she.

"Have you earned them so soon?" with some surprise, asked Mr. Sanford.

"I do not know whether I have earned money enough to buy them or not, but I did not buy them; they were given to me. Guess the giver, papa."

"Indeed, I know of no one here that would give my pet a pair of shoes, except her father, and he could not."

"Did you ever lose a fur cap, father?"

"I do not know what you mean. A fur cap—indeed, it is a long time since I have been the owner of such an article."

"You did lose one, though. It was first stolen, then devoured, and these shoes are come in place of it."

"My little girl is talking strangely. I don't understand her."

"Then, papa, if you will please eat that piece of beef, and not let it get cool as fast as it is doing, I will tell you again what I mean."

"A long time ago you went up a mountain. I have forgotten its long, hard name;

but it had a Din about it, I believe, and a bear destroyed your cap in the night, when you were keeping watch, asleep."

Mr. and Mrs. Sanford both laughed merrily at this interpretation of doing watch duty.

"And that cap brought me this pair of shoes," added the glad little girl, taking them up by the fastening strings, and twirling them round and round.

"Pray tell me the connection," said her father, catching her in the midst of her shoe dance, "between a bear-crushed cap on Mount Katahdin sixteen years ago, and these," taking hold of the shoes.

"Mr. Clifford said he shot the bear, whose name was Bruin; but, papa, how did you know what the bear's Christian name was?"

"The bear's Christian name!" exclaimed both parents at once.

"Wasn't the bear's name Bruin Bear?" with great seriousness asked Martha. "When Mr. Clifford wanted to know what your name was beside Sanford, he asked me for your Christian name, and I thought if

your first name was Robert, then the bear's must be Bruin."

Without pausing for her answer, Martha went on to tell that Mr. Clifford had let the bear destroy her father's cap, and gave her shoes for the interest.

Mr. and Mrs. Sanford were both surprised and pleased at this peculiar conceit of Mr. Clifford, respecting the obligation they were under, but they took great care to explain to Martha the meaning of the term Christian name, telling her that it was the name by which persons were baptized into Christ.

"But bears are not baptized," urged the child.

"And bears have not Christian names. Bruin is but another name for Bear, just the same as you might be called a child, and also a little girl, but you would still be the same Martha Sanford," replied her father.

This little shoe incident turned the current of gloom from Mr. Sanford's mind for the

time, and when he finished his evening meal, and went out to cut one of the few remaining tree branches for the Sunday's fuel, he did not think once of the emptiness of the coming morning of Monday. His thoughts were of the sweet interlude of Sabbath time.

"Papa," called Martha from the pathway by the door, "please come in. Mr. Clifford wishes to see you."

"Tell Mr. Clifford I will come in a moment," replied Mr. Sanford, giving the last few strokes to a knotty stick. Then putting aside his axe, he entered the room where Mr. Clifford was already carrying on a lively conversation with Mrs. Sanford and Martha. No one would have imagined him to be the same person as two hours before, when he walked so grave and serious-looking down from the mill, with the almost as grave child beside him.

"Good evening, friend," was the accost of Mr. Sanford.

"The very friend I came to see," said Mr. Clifford, "and since my visit is of the very

shortest kind, not even polite enough to take the proffered seat, you perceive" (pointing to the chair upon whose back his hand rested), "I must make known my business. Are you very busy now; I mean, are your days so heavy with toil that you could not do a little more work at night?"

"My nights are as full as my days are likely to be," replied Mr. Sanford. "I am out of work."

"That is well," said Mr. Clifford.

"I can't say the same," replied Mr. Sanford.

"Excuse me, my friend. I was speaking of your want of employment, or its effect upon others, not yourself. In plain terms, what I want is this. The mill on Silver-Sound Creek has no insurance effected upon it. The agents of the offices to whom I have applied are not yet ready to issue policies, and in the mean time the risk is too great to be run. We want a watchman. I know of no one about the village whom I am willing to trust. Will you take the post?"

"What are duty hours?"

"Eight in the evening to five in the morning. The reward will be thirty dollars a month, if you continue longer than one month; if not, thirty-five."

"This seems rather high wages," said Mr. Sanford.

"The risk is great, and a faithful man hard to find."

"Do you have any bears up there?" asked Martha. "Aren't you afraid that he will go to sleep?"

This allusion was very happily received, and Mr. Clifford assured Martha, that he would have an open eye upon her father, whenever he thought there were any growlers about.

"May I call you the man for the place?" concluded he, "for I am in great haste."

"Thank you, Clifford, for the chance," said Mr. Sanford. "If I can perform the duty to your satisfaction I am ready. When does my time of duty commence?"

"You may come up on Monday if you have nothing to keep you."

Turning to Martha, he said, "You will have a new teacher at the Sabbath-school to-morrow, and without giving her a chance to put the eager "Who" which quivered on her tongue, he said, "Good night," and went hurrying away.

Yes, Saturday night, with its presage of peace and rest for the morrow, had indeed come to this cottage in Dellville, and upon its ascending where all the past lies garnered, there went with it fervent praise.

Who would have thought Martha's wish would have been the instrument of such good to her father?

CHAPTER VII.

There were a trio of bright, happy faces at the breakfast table of Mr. Sanford on the morning following the good news of Mr. Clifford.

I think each one tried to see who could wear the happiest face in very gratitude.

The Sabbath bells hushed for the time the lesser notes of birds. Never, since in Dellville Mrs. Sanford had been, had those ringing tones brought so much of unmixed joy.

During the morning service Martha perplexed herself in endeavoring to find a reason for any change in her Sabbath-school class. Miss Morton, her teacher, as in time past, occupied her usual seat in church. So lost was she to the progression of the service, that it required a reminder from her father to call back the wandering mind

Church being over, and the various classes having assembled in their proper pews, to Martha's astonishment, Mr. Clifford took the seat of teacher to her own, Miss Morton having assumed the same duties to a class of new pupils.

The line of little faces grew expressive of wonder, pleasure, and regret.

Opening prayer being past, Mr. Clifford told them "that a new class having been formed of children never before in a Sabbath-school, Miss Morton had been chosen, because of her great power of interesting and pleasing children, to take charge of it. "I am sorry for you," said he, "to have lost so good and kind a teacher, but I hope you will try and like me a little at least."

"I do like you," answered a dark, curled haired little thing, from the corner of the pew most remote from Mr. Clifford.

"Why do you like me?" asked Mr. Clifford. "I don't think you know me. Do you know my name?"

"O no, sir," all unconfused, replied the

child, "I don't know your name, but I like you."

"What do you like me for?" pursued Mr. Clifford, wishing to get the thought in its first form.

The only answer that came from the mouth hung about with ever-moving curls was—

"I guess it's because I like you."

Satisfied that the wee maiden would not give any more than she had proffered, Mr. Clifford left the questioning and proceeded with the lesson of the day.

It was the story of the blessing on the Judean coast of little ones, by the wonderful Redeemer, eighteen hundred years ago.

Happily was the picture drawn of that sea-coast scene; of the gathering together of parents, bringing each their children, to receive the blessing of the Saviour.

The lesson it taught was pleasantly urged upon that class of little girls, and they were told, that the same blessing would be given

to them if they asked it of the same Giver, whose gifts await the seeking, everywhere.

The Sabbath passed away. The Monday morning of action and toil had come.

Martha went to school rather earlier than usual, for in her pleasure at the gift of Mr. Clifford on Saturday night, she had forgotten her work for the next week. A group of boys and girls were gathered about the door of the school-house, eagerly talking. Martha heard their voices, long before she saw them.

When she came into view, one of them, John Lambert, called out, "Here is one coming. You will go, won't you?"

"O yes! do go, Martha Sanford," echoed a dozen voices; "we shall be so happy."

"Go where? I don't know at all what you are making so much noise about," replied Martha, when she came within speaking distance.

"Don't know of the great invitation we have all had," exclaimed John Lambert, the first speaker.

"I don't know of any that you have had, unless it be to tear the walls of the school-house down with the noise you are making."

"We're going to wait until next year for the school committee to do that, then we'll help, if they ask," said the largest boy of the crowd.

"Martha Sanford," said Phebe Watson, creeping out of the tangled web of small children, "you know that in four weeks we are to have fourth of July. Well, we should have it any way, I suppose, but this is going to be a grand fourth of July, for Captain Granby, (you know where he lives,) well he is come home from sea, from a long voyage, square round the world, I heard Maggy Roy say; and he has brought wonderful things out of the sea, and the land, and I don't know what beside. He has invited all the children in the village, who will come with decent dresses, and clean faces, to come up to his place and spend the day. We're to have dinner on the long lawn, where the oak

trees grow, and to hear music, speak pieces, and then in the evening we are to have a merry time with the lawn all lit with hanging lamps, and a dance before we come away."

This speech had end in a grand clapping chorus from the youngest children of "O! nice! O! nice!" Martha joined in the universal joy that rang jubilant around the old brown building, that since its existence had not heard so much noise.

The bell terminated their talk of the expected good time, but it must be told that the number of long black marks attached to the pupils' names in the record book that day was greater than on any other in the year. Our little friend, Martha, usually so careful to obey rule, and anxious to excel in her various studies, found four marks for whispering and inattention in class, written against her name.

This made her heart ache a little, and notwithstanding the prospect that looked so tempting, distant four weeks away, she left

school in a mood less happy than usual, a mood which was not at all improved by hearing one of the girls in class with her remark, "I am glad to have that particular Martha Sanford have marks as bad as any of the rest, and I could have cried out, 'Good,' to-day when she lost her place, and stupid Amy Benton went above her, I was so glad."

This girl was one of the unfortunate ones in the school. She did not do well, and was always delighted when any one equalled herself, in that respect.

The remark was met by the reply, "You are amiable and kind in your wishes as usual. I was sorry to have Martha lose a place she has kept so long." Martha heard this, as she was putting on her bonnet and shawl. Her thought was: "I do not intend that those girls shall either feel glad to see me fail, or sorry that I have failed, I will take good care to keep my place hereafter, though all the world gets invited to Independence at Captain Granby's." Without going

home, Martha went to the millfor her work. When it was obtained and she returned, she opened the cottage-door, but did not see her mother. This was very unusual, and Martha went through the house without finding her. Only one friend in Dellville had Mrs. Sanford, the Mrs Norton, who came at Harry's illness. "Can mother have gone to see Mrs. Norton?" thought Martha, "but surely she would not have left the house unlocked."

Awhile she waited, then becoming impatient, after the lapse of half an hour, she put her work away and walked up the hill to Mrs. Norton's house.

Mrs. Sanford had not been well during the day. A farmer had come early on Monday morning to beg, more as a favor than as a labor, that Mr. Sanford would give him some advice regarding a new field, just ready for planting; but advice became labor, and he was detained until near evening, three miles from home.

Consequently, alone and not well, Mrs. Sanford had become low-spirited and fanciful.

This feeling continuing, she resolved to try the power of a conversation with Mrs. Norton. "Her current of strong good sense will drift me back to my usual place," thought she.

It was illness and not fancy that ran darkly through Mrs. Sanford's mind. When she had ascended the hill she was so weary that she was compelled to accept the proffered resting-place. She was not risen from it when her little daughter arrived. With Martha's assistance she walked home.

"I shall look after you to-night, before I sleep," was the parting remark of Mrs. Norton.

It proved that there was need for the care Mrs. Norton offered.

For many weary months Mrs. Sanford had striven to drive back the pressing tide of care from her pathway, and at the same time keep her husband lighted by her own cheerfulness.

Now a low fever coursed its way through her veins, and it was three weeks before she was able to lift her head from her pillow.

Martha's school was left, and Martha passed her time in attention to her mother, and in the pursuit of her loved occupation.

Mr. Sanford's days were spent at home and he became accustomed to the offices of nurse and housekeeper.

The real value of his night employment he learned during this time. Without it, he could not have provided food for his family, or needful luxuries for his wife.

In this time spent by our little cottage group in mutual care and love, testified by patience and a thousand acts of kindness, the village children were filling their minds with imaginary pleasures; enough to satisfy the wishes of fairies.

Martha went over to the school-house one day, during the third week of her mother's illness, to ask Phebe to carry her work to the mill for her, and bring her return package.

It was at the time of the afternoon recess.

The coming fête-day was the subject on

which the little minds and tongues were busy.

Three boys were telling the wonderful things which were to be shown on that day.

"Captain Granby has a cannibal, I know," said William Burr. "George Mahoney that works up in the big garden told me so, and he is going to show it to us."

"Well, the cannibal won't be so nice to see, as the Feejee Island, I know it won't," cried little Jack Blake; "though I would like to see any of those wonderful things. I wonder what they are made of?"

Some of the boys, a little older in years, and wiser through knowledge, heard this catalogue of wonders, among which we have selected two to show the variety, and resolved to carry on the illusion.

"Willie Burr," said one, "I know what a cannibal is made of."

"What?" asked Willie, eager and breathless.

"Will you take good care of your eyes, if I tell you?"

"Will it hurt my eyes?" asked Willie. "I'll take good care of them."

"I was afraid you would lose them, so that the cannibal would not have a chance to see them, they were coming this way so fast."

Willie withdrew a certain portion of his large, beautiful orbs, that would startle the beholder at times. They looked wonderfully as if they were upon the verge of revolving, in an orbit larger than their own.

"About that cannibal," asked Willie. "What is it made of?"

"Of a man," was the reply, perfectly astounding the group of little ones.

"I don't believe it," said Willie, forgetting all about his eyes. "How could Captain Granby bring a man so far, and not alive? Say, Nathan, is it a mummy that you mean?"

"A cannibal isn't a mummy at all, it is a live man that eats other men when it is hungry."

"*Does* it ever eat little boys?" gasped Willie, "for I don't want to be ate up."

"I reckon Captain Granby will look out for that," said Nathan, "and have it well fed before the children get there, though there are so many going that it would be hard to find if any one were gone, immediately."

"I won't go," exclaimed several of the little group. "I am afraid."

Nathan perceived that he had really spoiled the children's pleasure, and not being an ill-natured boy, he said—

"See here, boys, who said Captain Granby had a cannibal?"

"You," exclaimed two or three voices.

"Indeed I did not. You need not be afraid. Captain Granby has no such animal in his keeping. I only told you what a cannibal really is, not that Captain Granby had one."

The Feejee Island was reserved for future discussion, for the bell put an end to the conversation.

Martha went home somewhat in awe, not-

withstanding the explanation concerning cannibals.

The Feejee wandered up and down in her imagination. "What could it be?"

Right merrily she laughed, when, at evening, she ventured to put the question to her father, and for answer he made her find ten little circles in the Pacific Ocean, and told her that there, fast anchored, were the Feejee Islands, and asked her how she thought Captain Granby's ship, the "Wild Wave," would look towing an island into Boston harbor, and how if once there, she imagined it could be carried fifty miles to Dellville?

A week alone remained before the arrival of the eventful day which was so to gladden the hearts of Dellville's little ones. It was the evening of the day in which Martha had made the request to Phebe, concerning her work. Phebe had undertaken the good office cheerfully, and having performed it, carried the supply of work to Martha. Mr. Sanford was with his wife, and Martha begged Phebe to stay a little while with her, urging, "I

know it is growing dark, but Papa will take you home, on his way to watch."

The two girls had much to talk about. Martha asked how far her classes had gotten in the various books since she had been at home, and Phebe told her this, and many items of interest, concerning the scholars. After awhile, during which both children were thinking of the approaching festivities, Phebe alluded to the subject, by informing Martha that the reading class were to go from their school, dressed in white, with blue trimmings, and to wear red flowers bound about their hair.

"That will not be so pretty as some other color, with the blue and white," said Martha.

"Wait until I tell you all. The colors are to be worn, because the class are to read, in concert, that long article, the Declaration of Independence, and each one is to carry in her right hand a tiny flag, red, white, and blue, and when the Declaration is read, we are to sing 'The Star Spangled Banner,'

and wave our flags, whilst we sing. Won't that be fine?"

"Yes," replied Martha.

"You don't seem to take very much interest, Martha, why is it?"

"Yes, Phebe, I do."

"Are you not going?" asked Phebe, for something in her little friend's voice expressed doubt.

"No, Phebe, I cannot go."

"Cannot go? Why, Martha Sanford, you *must* go; we have all been drilled for a week in the reading of that Declaration, but with the understanding that you are to be leader when the time arrives, because Mr. Peters' says 'you have the best understanding of how it should be read!'"

The rosy color grew in Martha's face, at this pleasant acknowledgment of her effort to understand whatever she read; but she still said, sadly, "Indeed, I cannot go."

"Your mother is getting better?" questioned Phebe.

"Yes, mamma is better; she ate her gruel to-day, without any one to feed her."

"Then why is it that you cannot go? I really must know."

Something in Martha's nature forbade her to say, "It is because I have no white dress to wear."

Phebe thought it might be the reason, and determined to find out. "I have a new dress," she said, "and I earned it myself. Are you going to buy one, with your money?" she added.

"No," was the reply.

"Then perhaps you have one that will do?"

"I have not a white dress, Phebe. I hear mother moving, and must see if she wishes me," hurriedly said Martha, really pained to have told that she had no dress to go in.

Mr. Sanford went home with Phebe. He thought "What a quiet little girl this is, that walks with her hand in mine. She talks less even than my Martha." He did not know that a busy little brain worked a difficult problem in that silent walk.

The morning following, Phebe Watson's

Aunt Lizzie asked her what disturbed her dreams. "You talked, Phebe," she said. "Three times, you exclaimed, 'I will have it done, and I will fix it all right.'"

"I don't remember dreaming at all, but I do know I thought I would fix it before going to sleep. I will tell you, Aunt Lizzie, and perhaps you will help me. I wish to get a dress, and have it made for Martha Sanford, before the Fourth of July. You know that her mother has been sick and cannot do it for her."

"I will do what I can to help you," replied Aunt Lizzie. Phebe Watson had an earnest little heart; it sometimes, nay, often went away from her own keeping, but then it always came from its wanderings up to the gate that says over it "I am sorry. "Now she grew very resolute. To school she went, gathered around her a group of girls, and in fact before she had concluded her argument, there were half a dozen boys of the circle.

The little lawyer urged her plea, finely.

She told the whole story of the sickness, and the disappointment, and some key to hearts was given her, for she pressed the matter home, and made them all feel as if the case were their own, and they were to give, to enable themselves to be happy by giving. "Hurrah for our Barrister," shouted the boys, when she finished. "We'll engage you to plead our cause in all the future! Three cheers for the 'new pleader,'" and they rang loud and clear, as much to hide emotion, as to express it.

The boy Nathan, who had alarmed Willie by the cannibal information, walking up, said, with a deep bow, "Here's my offering; where's the hat?"

Phebe offered her sun-bonnet.

"Who ever did hear of a sun-bonnet, for a contribution box?" exclaimed Nathan, "but, with new lawyers we must expect new orders, and accordingly here it goes," dropping, whilst speaking, a quarter of a dollar into the depth of the bonnet.

So successful was Phebe, that ere the sun

went down, she had two dollars, quite enough for the white muslin dress.

Aunt Lizzie cut it, fitting it to the person of the Amy who held Martha's place in class, and was very near to her in size.

Then came the making. Little hands tried, for the first time, their skill at fine sewing, and they succeeded. Under Aunt Lizzie's guidance the dress was finished, and pronounced perfect, by the six sewers who had given their fingers many a prick in its making. Phebe could not do her ordinary number of hooks and eyes during this dress-making time, and Mr. Clifford asked her for a reason.

She told him "she had been very busy dress-making."

Mr. Clifford was much amused at this answer from a girl not yet twelve years of age. Phebe saw the smile, and with something of pride and a good deal of indignation, she justified herself by telling him how she had used her time.

"And the dress is all ready for the grand occasion?" said he

"Yes, sir."

"And the blue ribbons?"

"Have been forgotten," exclaimed Phebe. "What shall we do? for the money is all gone."

"I will tell you what we will do," said Mr. Clifford, "we will buy them, you and I. When shall we go for them?"

"But I have no money left," urged Phebe.

"I do not want your money; I think the shopman will take mine, but I wish you to tell me what ribbons to buy." On the morrow the blue trimmings were purchased and placed with the dress in a white box, to be sent to Mr. Sanford's house. Then arose a great difficulty. Who would carry it? No one was willing to acknowledge their own aid in the matter. After consulting Mr. Clifford, it was agreed that the box should enclose a note with these words:—"This dress is for the little girl who has been so

kindly attentive to her mother whilst sick. Her friends hope she will make them happy by appearing in it, on the Fourth of July." It was left in the morning twilight just before Mr. Sanford's time for returning from his night watch, upon the stone step of the door, the placer of it meanwhile watching its safety, until he saw Mr. Sanford take it up and carry it in.

"O! how good, how kind everybody is. I do so wonder who sent me this," exclaimed Martha, lost in wonder at the fairy-like gift, "and found on the door-step, too; what a strange way." "I can't thank anybody," suddenly she said. "I haven't anybody to thank, but mamma; I can thank God, can't I? for He told somebody to give it to me."

Mrs. Sanford turned her pale, sick face to the wall, but it was to express her gratitude that her child was led to the bright source whence all good flows.

"I am as glad and as thankful as you, my child, perhaps more so, for it has troubled me many times to know that I was lying

here unable to fit you to enjoy the coming day."

It was charming to see Martha display to Mr. Clifford the dress and ribbons the next time he called, and to hear her simple wonder, and her quaint guesses as to the giver.

CHAPTER VIII.

Cannon roared and boomed their thunderous echoes back from the many towering hills that rose around Dellville, at the opening of the eventful day.

The sun looked up from the Pine Hill, the point from which he always took his first morning glance upon the affairs of the village, and there were no wrinkles around his brow, or a wisp of mist even, intercepting the brilliance of the early hours.

At eight of the clock, the class who were to read the Declaration in concert, assembled at the school-house. Martha had not been able to meet with them before, but she had not been idle. Her father had read it to and with her; made much of it clear to her com-

prehension, and when she took her place and began to read, Mr. Peters felt convinced that he had chosen wisely, but he was not aware of the many times the child had read it. Ten was the hour at which the invitation was given. Many were the little toilettes requiring due care on that morning. None was performed more simply, quietly, and thankfully than Martha Sanford's.

"I am so sorry that you cannot go, mamma," Martha said, when attired in her pretty dress, blue ribbons, and wreath of leaves of myrtle, confining small scarlet flowers. "I do not like leaving you, lying on this bed, where you must stay all day."

"I think I shall get up to-day," replied Mrs. Sanford. "I feel much stronger. I think I might walk across the room."

"I am so glad; kiss me good-bye mamma. I shall send you my love often to-day," and the little girl bent over from the chair into which she had put herself, that she might kiss her mother, without wrinkling her dress

"The girls are coming up the hill. I will go, so that they will not come in to disturb you;" and turning once more her full beaming face to her mother's eyes, she softly opened the door, and went out to meet the events of the day.

Captain Granby had determined to make as many children happy as he could on this day; and he made many little hearts heavy with joy, whose lives were not often visited by it. The smooth lawns and gracefully curved walks were filled with shining faces before mid-day. The reading of the notable Declaration of American Independence, was well done.

The song of the banner that is star-spangled, mingled with the wind in the waving tree-tops, and the children surely left not a fold of song in the flags they unfurled to the breeze.

The feasting was not after the ordinary manner.

Three hundred children were to taste of the choice providings. Twelve tables were

placed underneath the oaks of many years, which had never before looked down upon the like. Upon the tables were fruits from the isles that are south of the cool New England, in which they were eaten. They gleamed with their rich hues of orange, green and brown, amid the less tempting, because more often seen, articles of food, either grown, or made, in the good State of Massachusetts.

"Captain Granby might almost as well have brought that Feejee Island as to have laden his ship with all these," thought Martha, as she looked upon the multitude of golden oranges, etc., that were piled around her.

"I am going to ask Nathan Pierce what they grow on the Feejee Islands," said Martha to her friend Phebe, "for I believe he knows almost every thing." Accordingly she left her place, and getting through the multitude that thronged the spaces between the tables, she pulled the tall boy's arm and said—

"Please, Nathan Pierce, I wish you to tell me what they grow on the Feejee Islands. Did these nice things come from them?"

"I reckon not, little Martha, they grow cannibals mostly there, I guess," replied Nathan.

Not another moment did Martha stay. "He treats me as he did Willie," thought she. "He thinks I believe him, but I don't. Father will tell me, I know."

"Did you find out, Martha?" asked Phebe.

"No, Nathan would not tell me rightly."

The eating continued long, but it was over before the day was gone.

Then came games of almost every kind, from the simple "Puss in the Corner," to a game at chess, played by two boys, with a rare set of chessmen from the Indian Isles, that Captain Granby feigned not to consider too nice for the players. The "King is not in his Palace," a pretty game, winding in and out, was at its height, played by a party of thirty children on a green slope, overlook-

ing the carriage way, when Phebe Watson cried, "There are Captain Granby's beautiful horses." Martha looked at the horses, then at the carriage, and to her great delight she saw, all comfortably reclining, surrounded by carriage pillows, her mother, under the care of Mr. Clifford. He had used his influence to induce Mrs. Norton to prepare her for a drive. Slowly was the carriage rolled about the grounds, and past the merry, shouting groups, and then out into the highway and on to the humble house, where Mrs. Norton was waiting to restore the invalid to her resting-place.

The children went home when the sun fell behind the hills. The elder of them were to return to finish the Independent day, by their dance under the lamp-lit trees. The little ones had seen so many wonders, from parts of the world whose existence was made known to them this day, that they could not find any more marvellous in the dream-land, whither they hastened.

Martha went to her home, her heart throb-

bing with the excitement and pleasures of the day, but now she thought them over, and when the wreath of faded flowers and white dress were taken off, and she began to prepare tea for her father, it was with the same bright cheerfulness that had made radiant her face at its beginning. Tea-making was a difficult matter to Martha. On this occasion she met with several mishaps. A splinter from a stick of wood that she was trying to push into the stove, not finding room for itself to enter there, went into her hand. Added to this, the tea-kettle slipt upon the stove whilst she was pouring the water from it, upon the tea, and a few scalding drops went upon her arm. She was longer than usual in her evening duties. They were not over when Mr. Clifford put his smiling face in at the door.

"I am come to carry this little one away. Can I, if I promise to bring her safely home at ten o'clock?" asked he of Mr. Sanford, who was sitting in the rear-door of the cottage, listening to the account Martha poured into his ears, of the day's enjoyment.

"Why, Mr. Clifford," he replied, "how can you ask it? I am come home, and find Martha with a splinter of wood in her hand, which I had not removed, when I notice that her arm is bound up in flour. She is hurt in her hand and burned in her arm."

"I can wash dishes, papa," said Martha.

"I think that decides the point," replied Mr. Clifford, continuing, "don't raise any further objections please, I have provided a protector to Mrs. Sanford, as you must go to the mill. Come, my little lady, the music flows into my imagination, or my ears, I wonder which," and Mr. Clifford half closed his eyes, and stood as one does, when concentrating the power of all the senses for the time in one.

"I will be as quick as I can, Mr. Clifford," said Martha.

Mr. Clifford heard these words, but he did not see the shaking of the small hands, or hear the beating of the hurried heart, as the owner of both made all haste to put away the evidences of her labor.

"Are you too weary to make our walk a little longer than to Captain Granby's, and to call for Phebe Watson?" asked Mr. Clifford, when they were started.

"No, sir! and Phebe will be so glad to go. I think you are a very good man," said Martha, giving her hand to Mr. Clifford, as he held his for it.

"Why do you think me good, Martha?"

"Because you are going to take Phebe and me to Captain Granby's."

"I do this to make myself happy, to give Mr. Clifford pleasure."

"Does not doing good always make us happy? It does me. I think that is the reason that I try to do right, when I do," said Martha.

"My little friend is a philosopher, very young."

Martha did not know the meaning of philosopher, and she had not the time in which to ask, for they were come to Mrs. Watson's house.

Phebe was as joyous as Martha, at the prospect of the evening.

Captain Granby had invited a circle of friends to the entertainment, and the children there present were those only who came with the invited guests.

Each one had the privilege of bringing as many as they chose, and so many claimants there were, that the evening saw one-half as many of the lesser ones as the day had done.

A clock in a church tower struck nine.

Merry were the happy throng. Merrily rang the notes of music from violin and piano; when up the long line of oak and poplar trees, came a cry that drowned in an instant all others.

Fire! was the note, and every one heard it, and every one echoed it;—but none knew the direction whence it came.

Captain Granby went up to the house observatory, for the trees were too thick to allow the village to be seen.

He hurried down with the news that "the crowd were rushing in the direction of the Creek."

Mr. Clifford ran. Many followed his footsteps.

Mr. Sanford left his home at the usual hour, and commenced his duty as watchman for the night. Every half-hour it was his custom to walk entirely around the premises, in which the buildings were located. When he heard the stroke of nine, stealing up through the mist of the river, he went his round, and returned to his station beside the table, on which burned his lamp, and where were his books and papers. He failed to make fast the knob of the door, and as he seated himself in his chair, the door was thrown open by a rush of wind. He arose to close it, and as he did so thought "This is very unusual, this sudden stirring of the air when all is so still and the fog lies quiet in the valley." He looked out before shutting the door, and saw what he thought to be a glow of light shining through several windows, high up in the mill. He looked back to see that his lamp was in a safe position, and hurried away to the place to ascertain the cause. The eastern sky had upon it the brightness of the newly-risen moon, and at first he deemed

the light that coming from it; but a half moment of time taught him that the light from the moon was yellow and cool, and this inner light grew deep and fire-like. In an instant he applied his hand to the pocket in which he always carried the key. The conviction came as quickly that he had not it. Mr. Clifford had borrowed it in the morning, and either forgotten to return it, or failing to do so had laid it down and left it. By this time Mr. Sanford knew that fire was kindled in the mill; he saw the creeping of the flames as they climbed along the wooden work inside.

One long, loud cry of "Fire!" burst from his lips, and he dashed with all his strength a heavy iron bar against a lower window. Three times he struck, ere the sash was broken. Then he crept in and turned the great water-wheel into motion. The hose-pipe was new; it had never been used. Mr. Sanford at this time heard his cry echoed by many voices, and before he had filled the pipe, assistance was at hand. He left the men who had first come, to take the charge of it, and

went up the dark winding staircase, groping his way as best he could, to the upper story, whence the fire issued. As he opened the door, the long room seemed filled with flame. It came against him. He almost inhaled it before he could shut the door and keep it out for a time. He rushed down, catching up in his way a valuable case that he knew the exact position of. Then he issued his orders to the men below; the pipe was filled, and now they began to play upon the top of the building. Three windows the flames were leaping out from. Into the midst of this pouring fire the water fell.

Steadily the stream was guided where the fire grew strongest. This state of affairs went on until the laborers began to say, "It is of no use; the fire is stronger than the water." Mr. Sanford heard the words passing from one to another, and cried, "It is of use, it must be; play on, play strongly." Thus cheered, encouraged and guided, the firemen did work. At the height of the fire and the noise that attended it, a wee figure,

half child, half sprite it seemed, was seen rushing, now among the men, who nearly overran it, then into the building itself, before it could be captured. Mr. Clifford saw it just as it ran in through the darkness, and following it past the black revolving wheel, he caught the object on the stair-way.

"What are you here for, Martha?" he asked, carrying her out into the air.

"Mr. Clifford, where is my father?" was the answer the trembler gave.

"He is safe."

"Then I am going to tell mother so."

Mr. Clifford was too anxious, too much engaged to think of aught beyond the actual safety of Martha, and left her without another word to return to his duty.

Martha ran a little distance, the light from the burning guiding her steps, then came the questioning thought, "Mr. Clifford said my father was safe; did he *know* what he said to be true? I must find out before I go." She turned her face toward the fire, and hurried back into the midst of the work-

ing mass of men and boys. She did not see her father's face, or hear his voice mingling with the many. The door of a building within the mill enclosure was open. Martha went in, and up the staircase to an upper room, where she might look down upon the scene below. Her ascent was rewarded by a momentary sight of the face of her father. This sufficed her eager aching desire, and she never paused once between the burning mill and her home, into which she sped with such wildness of manner and attire, that the nurse of the evening, fearful of the effect upon Mrs. Sanford of such an apparition, (for she had become greatly exhausted by her day's endeavor,) caught the child in her arms, and laying her hand upon the little mouth, whose owner scarcely could breathe, much less speak, she conveyed her out of the door whence she had come in, and before Mrs. Sanford had awakened from the half slumberous state into which she had fallen, the good woman was sitting upon the stone step of the door, holding Martha in her arms.

She quieted her agitation, and heard her story, so soon as she was able to impart it, given very directly, and without one unnecessary word, so full of earnest desire was Martha to be permitted to go to her mother. The voice of Mrs. Sanford was heard from within.

The nurse and Martha went in.

"What is that I hear?" asked Mrs. Sanford. "That bell sounds like a fire-bell."

"It is a fire-bell, mamma," replied Martha, "and the fire is up at the mill, but they are putting it out, and it won't burn all down. I've seen papa," said she, seeing the look of great pain that came up to her mother's brow, and shot out from her eyes. "He is all safe. I waited to see him. I wouldn't come away till I saw him, to be sure, you know, mamma," and Martha sealed her assurance with a kiss that gave to her lips the moisture of tears, from the full eyelids they pressed.

A moment of silence followed, and then Mrs. Sanford asked—

"Why did you go to the fire?"

"Because I thought the Silver-Creek Mill might be on fire."

"But you could not put it out, and a fire is a bad place for a little girl. You might have been hurt."

"Isn't it a bad place for any one, and might not papa get hurt?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Well, mamma, I wished to see that he was unhurt, and when I saw him I came away."

"Did he know that you were there?"

"He did not see me at all."

"That was quite right, because if he had known his little daughter to be in such a place, he would have been obliged to neglect the duty of attending to Mr. Clifford's interests, and have had her to care for. You were a thoughtful child for your mother," she added, "and she thanks you for your good news."

There was little of sleep in the Dellville cottage that night following upon the festive Fourth of July.

Two hours later than the hour of ten, (that named for Martha's return,) brought Mr. Sanford and Mr. Clifford, with an attending physician.

When the fire came to be subdued, and the last vestige of flame had disappeared, Mr. Sanford suddenly fainted. It was found that he had a burn upon his shoulder. When he had gone up to ascertain the extent of the fire and its locality, that he might be enabled to guide the men aright in their efforts for its extinguishing, he had met the flame at the door, and in turning to close it, the cotton fabric of his coat had taken fire. He felt the burning, and suddenly availing himself of the woollen baize which served as lining to the door, he applied his shoulder to it with such force as to crush the fire, and he was all unconscious of the extent of his burn, so long as there was need for exertion in behalf of the mill. When that was gone, he, as has been stated, fainted from conjoined pain and exhaustion. The injury was not very serious. After a few days

he was quite restored to his former condition.

The origin of the fire did not long remain a mystery. Mr. Clifford questioned Mr. Sanford concerning the persons whom he had seen near, after the time of his going up.

"I saw no one," said Mr. Sanford, "about the premises, and met no one as I went up, except Matthew Daly, and his walk was quite uncertain; it was too dark to notice aught more."

Upon being questioned, Matthew said, "I left my coat inside, and the fog coming on cool, I went into the building to get it for myself."

"Where was your pipe when you went in, Matthew?" asked Mr. Clifford.

"Indeed, and my pipe's fire had gone down into its ashes an hour before; there wasn't one small bit of spark went in with me."

Matthew's little son made his father's word doubted, for, before parental authority could stop the child, he said—

"Why, pa, don't you know you took the last match Jim O'Grady gave me to burn my fire-crackers with, and lit your pipe just beside the potato patch?"

Poor Matthew! he lost his honorable place of key-carrier to Silver-Sound Creek Mill from that time.

CHAPTER IX.

Martha's summer task was not neglected. Steadily she pursued it, though ofttimes through great difficulties, such as every one in this world must meet, in their efforts to do that which is great and true.

The summer had woven a tangled mat of green above small Harry's place of rest; the soft southern breezes stole in the quiet of the morn through the grassy fibres, which were lifted up by it to fall again, in the still hours when only the sun shed its light upon them; and still nearer the sod were they at a later time, when a mother's tears weighed them deeper than night dews were wont to do. Through these early mornings, and deep noons, and shadowy evenings, a sister's hands

were working, and a sister's heart was wishing to lift the sleeper up, and to bear him away to where others, kindred unto him, were sleeping. At school, every moment that could be gleaned from books or from play was cheerfully dedicated to the work. Martha counted her time by pennies, for after a practice of three weeks she was able to earn four cents in one hour.

The time of recess was limited to fifteen minutes, during which in both sessions of the day, our little friend might be seen sometimes behind the cover of her school-desk, or if the weather were fair, out under the shade of a cedar tree, (sitting upon a stone which Nathan, the boy who had told her that the Feejee Islands grew cannibals, had rolled down for her especial use, from the great stone wall, built near by,) steadily building up the little fortune which she intended offering upon the altar of affection. Martha did not pursue her task unmolested. At first the girls in class with her were hurt that she would not join in their games. After trying

in vain for about a week, to induce her to keep "those hateful hooks and eyes" where they declared they belonged, "in the basket," they changed the style of inducement. Now, upon Martha's fair little head was poured out all the wrath of words that could be found. She was greeted at every recurring time of work with the name of "Miser! miser! she works to save her money!" "I wouldn't wear such old clothes, and earn so much, I know!" All these taunts, unkind though they were, and some of them coming from the girls who had been the donors of the pretty white dress, (though of this, happily Martha did not know,) were very hard to be borne, as borne they must be, in silence. The only reply they ever brought forth was, "I am not a miser, and I am not earning money to lay it up," accompanied by bright shining tear-drops, which were quickly wiped away, lest by falling, they might tarnish the hooks and eyes.

Martha's sun-bonnet was both old and worn. It once had been blue cambric, now

it was faded to nearly white; still it was whole and clean. The owner of this sun-bonnet was one day at her usual place upon the stone under the tree of cedar, when one girl, really more intent upon mischief than upon inflicting misery, approached her from behind, with a stealthy catlike tread, and seizing upon the crown of the bonnet, she lifted it up, and shouting, "Now we'll see if Miss Miser won't have to bring out some of her hoard;" she darted away with it, toward a swift running stream at a short distance, and sent the poor, faded thing into its whirling waters. Before Martha could reach the bank the bonnet was far down, and passing on the swift current, out of sight.

"O Lucy Martin, you don't know what you have done!" was Martha's only remark, as the girls came crowding to the brink of the stream. This act ended Martha's persecutions, for it turned the current of popular opinion in her favor. Her strong friend Phebe was soon at her side, and consolation

slipt out from her heart as it was wont to do, though be it remembered it was Martha herself who first showed her how to be thoughtful and kind, but Phebe certainly returned the boon with great interest. On this occasion her comfort came in the following manner:—

"How nice," she said, "it comes just in time, I have got a new sun-bonnet. Aunt Lizzie told me to stop for it on my way to school, and it is in my desk. I will lend it to you to wear home to-night; don't look so badly about it," and Phebe turned her right honest, freckled face upward, stooping the while that she might get under the light of Martha's eyes.

The light of Martha's eyes at this moment was gone out; drowned in tears, tears not of anger, but grief, that she should be so unjustly esteemed, mingled with a sudden, thankful gladness, that one friend was kindly true. It was several moments before the warm tears were dried, and Martha thanked Phebe for her offer of a bonnet to wear home. She

insisted upon taking the worn bonnet instead of the new, as Phebe fain would have had it.

There were some few who faintly cried "Shame!" to Lucy Martin, but they were too much under the same condemnation to accuse her act very loudly. Martha went to her home that night under the strange bonnet, and when she arrived was taken by her mother for the veritable owner thereof. The story of the stream-given article was scarcely told, when Mrs. Sanford espied her husband hurrying up the hill, with the greatest speed possible.

Mr. Clifford had gone out that afternoon to angle for trout, farther down the stream into which the bonnet had been cast. He had tried his skill, but the sun was too bright, and the trout unwilling to take the bait. After waiting until he was tired for the speckled fish, he gave up the effort, and casting himself upon a shaded bank was sitting watching, whatever moved, or was silent in the sky, or on the earth, when an object in

the stream attracted his attention. It was Martha's bonnet. He caught it upon the end of his angling rod, and brought it safe to shore, two miles from the point at which it was cast in. He examined the drenched article, and recognized it as having been the head-covering of his little friend. He started up from his reverie and hastened to the village. At its entrance he met Mr. Sanford, and told him what he had found. It now was time for school to be over. Whilst Mr. Sanford went home, Mr. Clifford went to the school-house to see if aught had happened to Martha. The reader already knows that their fears were quite groundless, and that faded, blue sun-bonnet's owner was safe from the running stream. The following morning Martha appeared at the usual hour, with her own bonnet freshly done up, and looking all the better for its adventure.

Not long after this affair, Mr. Peters invited the class in botany to take walks with him every Saturday afternoon, into the forests and along the banks of the streams,

to search for wild flowers. These walks were very charming to the children, partaking more of the pic-nic than the simple walk. During the two months in which they were continued, only twice did Martha join them, so devoted was she to her labor of love. At last, when the days were becoming shorter, and the little birds were leaving their nests in the brown-growing trees, Martha thought she had almost money enough in Mr. Clifford's hands to carry out her plan. She ventured to ask him. She thought from the arithmetic that she could apply to the subject, that she must have earned about fourteen dollars. To her surprise, he very gravely informed her that "he was her banker to the amount of twenty dollars."

"What do you mean by being my banker?" asked Martha.

"I mean that I have funds of yours."

"What are funds?"

"In your case, money."

"How much money have I earned?"

"I told you that I have twenty dollars belonging to one Martha Sanford."

Poor Martha! she could get no nearer the truth. She did not think that she had earned so much, but Mr. Clifford would mention no other sum.

"Then have I enough to carry Harry home?" she asked.

"Yes, my dear, you have;" and Mr. Clifford laid his hand upon the child-head that had conceived the plan and carried it so patiently and nobly to its end.

He counted out the money for her, gave it in four pieces of shining gold into her tremulous hand, and closing the small fingers over the full palm which they could not cover, he let her go to tell her story at home.

"Who shall I give it to?" was the question that would not make for itself an answer, whilst the questioner walked down the path-way beside the now swollen stream. Tea was upon the table when she went in, and partaking of it were her father, mother, and Mrs. Norton. This was a disappoint-ment to the full heart of Martha, eager to

pour her treasure into the hands of those for whom it had been earned, penny by penny, through the long summer days. The table converse was of the Maine home, "Osier Pass."

"The leaves are falling now, at Osier Pass," remarked Mrs. Norton.

"Yes, they must all have dropped except the oak, and the few that cling around the willows, till snow flakes cut their way through them," said Mr. Sanford.

"I should like to see the last of them go down, if fall they must," said Mrs. Sanford.

"And so should I, if I could know that I should see them come out again in the spring-time," added Mr. Sanford.

"I hope, somehow," cheeringly spoke Mrs. Norton, "that Osier Pass will let us all see its leaves come out, and grow, and fall again, before we die."

"Your hope is kind, but there is no prospect of its being so," replied Mrs. Sanford.

During this allusion Martha sat at table,

eating bread and butter, which came near to choking her, and saying—nothing.

Tea over, Mrs. Norton went away. No sooner was she gone, than Martha went to the same reed-woven sun-bonnet that had gone so unceremoniously down stream, and took from its folds her gold.

"See, mamma," said she, and she dropped one piece into her mother's hand. Her father drew near to know what was to be seen, whereupon the "See, papa," was uttered, and a shining piece was dropped into his hand.

A second went to her mother; a second to her father.

"Where did you get this?" was the united question.

"*Earned* it, at hooks and eyes," and two soft brown eyes looked very blest.

"And what will our little girl do with it?" asked the mother.

"She has given it to her parents."

"What are they to do with it?"

"Mamma, you know the night Harry was

sick and died. I could not go to sleep after I went to bed, and I heard you asking papa to take Harry up where Charlie and Mary are, and papa said he could not because he had no money, and now he has some, and he can take him, won't he, mamma? He has gone away without speaking to me."

"It is only because he cannot speak just now; he will come back presently."

And he did come back and fold his strong arms over little Martha so tightly, that she but half understood whether the caress, or the punishment, was intended. A kiss and word of blessing solved her doubt, and she began talking so fast and with so much enjoyment, that even the touching melancholy attached to her offering became bright; and the plan for carrying out Martha's intention was all made, before the excited Martha's head found repose upon her pillow, whereon the dream-land grew into her view, and she saw angels white and glittering hovering around the enclosed graves at Osier Pass, and preparing, as she believed, a place for the coming Harry.

CHAPTER X.

The tenth of October came, the day on which Mr. and Mrs. Sanford, with Martha were to leave Dellville for their olden home in Maine.

Every arrangement had been made preparatory to leaving. Martha watched the sun as he raised his yellow face over the great Oak Hill, which stood like a tower to guard the entrance of the quaint village, and declared that "The day would be good, for the sun said so." The cottage was to be closed for the time of absence, and many were the needful preparations.

Poor kittie was forgotten, locked in, and as Mr. Sanford turned back to secure the gate fastening, he saw her honest, white face

peering out of a window, whereto she had climbed to see what was carrying all the family away. Now this kitten was a famous friend of Martha's, and as it happened, had been the second confidant of the two, unto whom she had intrusted her summer secret, and many were the whispering confidences of the little girl to honest, never repeating pussie. Kittie was released from cottage life and granted a holiday with Mrs. Norton, down the hill. This delay came near unto being fatal to their leaving, for they reached the place where the stage coach left, only at the latest moment. Mr. Clifford had promised to see them before they went, and was there. He put Mrs. Sanford and Martha into the coach, and Mr. Sanford turned to offer him his hand in parting, but instead of taking it, Mr. Clifford grasped the door of the coach and seated himself within it, just as the wheels began to roll.

"Why mamma, where is he going?" exclaimed, in a loud whisper, Martha, catching at her mother's sleeve.

"I don't know, child; wait and see," was Mrs. Sanford's reply.

For once, Martha was disobedient; she could not wait, but put the question immediately.

"I am going up to the railway-station in this coach, unless something prevents its reaching there," answered Mr. Clifford.

This satisfied Martha, but when they were there arrived, and she saw Mr. Clifford buy at the ticket-office three tickets, and a half-one, she was still more puzzled, but not unhappy, when her friend seated himself beside her, and the train started. All the day they went through the beautiful country, whose leaves were fast departing in their autumnal beauty. Mr. Clifford seemed to take to himself the especial care of Martha, and pleasure in talking to her. The only reply she obtained after adroitly putting questions as to his future intentions was—

"I have business at Bangor."

"Then are you to be with us until we get there?" asked Martha.

"Yes! my inquisitive pussy, I am; but you are forgetting to see what is outside," said he, pointing to the navy-yard at Portsmouth, which they were passing in sight of. This was, to the child addressed, a very novel sight; she grew wondrously interested as hull, and mast, and sail, and all the conspicuous parts of boats lying at the yard were pointed out, and the use of each made clear to her understanding. The steam-car rushed on, not waiting for Martha's eyes to look long, at what they were interested in.

At a pretty village twenty miles from Portsmouth our party got down for the night, spending its hours with a brother of Mrs. Sanford's, living there. Martha wondered, as did her father and mother, that Mr. Clifford did not go on, instead of waiting for them at the village-inn, but his plans were entirely his own, and he chose to impart them to none.

When the evening of the next day was drawing near, Osier Pass was once more under the view of the eyes that long had

looked love upon its green meadows and its dear cottage, whilst within its walls the precious affections of family and home had grown up. Now as the western sun shone full upon its roof, and sent pretty gilding from cloud-land, to ornament the chimney-tops and the bosom of the clear blue pond that lay just below, all this wealth of earth's dear love poured its tide over the two, who had joyed and wept most, there. Martha remembered the places where she had played, and the day they went away, with the ever-constant memory of the place where the dead were.

Not at Osier Pass were the travellers to sleep that night. They must of necessity go by, for strangers lived there. The morning following, at ten o'clock, was the appointed hour for the burial of little Harry. Mr. Clifford, with rare gentleness and kindness combined, took upon himself the care of the preparations, and there was no need for effort on the part of the family, who had come up hither.

The box containing the precious elements of the once living one, was brought into the enclosure. The gray-haired-pastor, who had breathed words of consolation over drowned Charlie, and told of the believer's reward, when Mary's spirit went upward, met the group, who went in, and over the grave, now opened, he spoke the words of resurrection and of life; he drew a gleam of hope down from the skies, and pierced with its radiance the grave's lowest depth, and sent the reflection thereof into the believing hearts who were clustered around. The burial rite was over. The pastor spoke personal words to his former friends and went out.

The four were left beside the fast-filling grave.

Martha spoke lowly and said, "Papa, what is that?" pointing to an object covered in one corner, just beyond the row of graves.

Without looking to see, her father answered, "I do not know."

"You may go and see," said Mr. Clifford.

Martha stepped over the tangled grass and briers, for Osier Pass was not now taken care of as formerly, and approached the veiled figure. She lifted one corner, and saw white marble. She dropped it and looked around, half frightened. Mr. Clifford had followed her and was standing near.

"Take the cover off, Martha," he said. She drew it down carefully and slowly, and saw a monument, beautiful in design, with a wreath of flowers around its base and upon its summit, and read on the tablet next to her, the name of "Harry."

"Who did this?" she almost cried, so great was her astonishment. Did you, Mr. Clifford?"

"No, Martha, it was you."

"How? No! sir, it will take all my money to do that," pointing graveward.

"Your money did that, and your love did this, Martha. I thank my little teacher for giving me this opportunity of showing her that she has taught me a good lesson."

"I must call mamma. What will she

say?" and Martha went to where her mother was watching the earth, as it fell upon the little one, unconscious, below.

"Mamma, come; see what kind Mr. Clifford has done for Harry." The mention of the name aroused both parents, and they followed Martha as she led them up to the beautiful token of remembrance that gleamed white before them.

There was little demonstration beyond that of silent tears. Mr. Clifford had stolen away, whilst Martha was gone to bring her parents. Afterward, gratitude was spoken and felt, and Mr. Clifford ever looked upon this coming up to Maine as the holiest journey in his life-way.

One scene more, and we must say farewell to Martha Sanford.

Ten years have passed since Harry was left, until the resurrection, at Osier Pass. Mr. Sanford returned to Dellville.

The mill where hooks and eyes were made was prospered.

Mr. Sanford's services and faithfulness at

the fire were never forgotten. From watchman he became, through several gradations, in two years, to be partner with Mr. Clifford.

Martha was sent to school, where every opportunity for gaining knowledge and for improvement in every possible way, was improved.

Money flowed in upon the dwellers at the cottage in Dellville, and some of this money went upward to Maine, and bought back one piece of hill-land and of meadow after another, and the willows that gave the farm its name, until one soft fine evening, the very hearth-stone was once more Mr. Sanford's, and hither they came to celebrate the event. Little Martha is come to the place where her life began. She is standing in the cottage door.

The Penobscot rolls its murmurous flood seaward; the sun says its golden good-night to the forests of Maine; the great river mist is just waiting to lift its wings and hover over the land.

Martha waits; before the mist conceals the view, others will join her. She looks down the road, twisting meanwhile a curl of her hair that will stray away from the soft brown mass, just like some one violet that will not grow with its sisters on the bank, but dips its head into the gurgling stream.

She is no longer the child of ten years but the young lady of twenty. Not now does she put hooks and eyes into white cards for two cents a dozen cards, for her father has enough for all her wants, and almost for her wishes; but the glory of her character is, that to-morrow morning she would as quietly and as cheerfully resume her former task, if she had it placed, as duty, before her, as she will arise with the dawn to start for the long anticipated trip to Mount Katahdin with her father, Mr. Clifford, and the others, who are to be of the party.

The expected guests are drawing nigh, and we must leave Martha to welcome and afterwards entertain them. Ere the day-light is gone, let us go into the place where Harry's

monument gleams, and look upon this victory wrought out in childhood, and learn what the lesson teaches. Thereby we may gain a reward, as sweetly grateful to the human heart, as that which shines like a halo around the fair head, just now intent upon making, as it oft has done, the happiness of others its first care.

THE END.